

CHAPTER 203  
PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANTS

**645—202.1(147) Definitions.**

*“Board”* means the board of physical and occupational therapy examiners.

*“Department”* means the department of public health.

*“Hour of continuing education”* means 50 minutes of attendance per clock hour.

*“Licensee”* means any person licensed to practice as a physical therapist assistant in the state of Iowa.

*“Licensure by interstate endorsement”* means the issuance of an Iowa license to practice as a physical therapist assistant to an applicant who is currently licensed in another state. Application will be considered on an individual basis for licensure in Iowa if the applicant meets the qualifications required of a licensed physical therapist assistant in Iowa.

**645—202.2(147) General.**

**202.2(1)** Licenses issued by the board shall be for licensure by examination or licensure by interstate endorsement. Each license shall be 8½ by 11 inches in size. Each license issued shall bear the signature of the chairperson of the board of physical and occupational therapy examiners.

**202.2(2)** The board requires the satisfactory completion of the National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE) or other nationally recognized equivalent examination as defined by the board.

**202.2(3)** For examinations taken prior to July 1, 1994, satisfactory completion shall be defined as receiving an overall examination score exceeding 1.5 standard deviations below the national average. For examinations completed after July 1, 1994, satisfactory completion shall be defined as receiving an overall examination score equal to or greater than the criterion-referenced passing point recommended by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy.

**202.2(4)** An examinee failing the examination shall be required to repeat the entire examination. No individual may repeat the National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE) or other nationally recognized equivalent examination more than three times every five years. Payment of the examination fee is required for all repeats of the examination.

**202.2(5)** A notarized copy of the official document of name change, if applicable, is required with initial application.

**202.2(6)** Persons desiring information concerning the time and place of meetings of the board of physical and occupational therapy examiners or other information should write to Professional Licensure, Iowa Department of Public Health, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0075.

**202.2(7)** Rescinded IAB 8/27/97, effective 10/1/97.

**202.2(8)** Incomplete applications that have been on file in the board office for two years shall be considered invalid and be destroyed. The application fee is nonrefundable.

**645—202.3(147) Licensure by examination.**

**202.3(1)** Applications for licensure to practice as a physical therapist assistant in Iowa shall be made to Professional Licensure, Iowa Department of Public Health, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0075 on an application form furnished by the board. The application shall include the following:

*a.* Applicant’s full name, current address, age, date of birth, place of birth, and other information as requested on the application form.

*b.* Foreign trained physical therapist assistants will submit an English translation and an equivalency evaluation of their professional curriculum. Education equivalency will be evaluated by one of the following: International Education Research Foundations, Inc., Credentials Evaluation Service, P.O. Box 66940, Los Angeles, CA 90066, telephone (213)390-6276; International Consultants of Delaware, Inc., 109 Barksdale, Professional Center, Newark, DE 19711, telephone (302)737-8715; International Credentialing Associates, South Trust Bank Building, Suite 1600, 150 Second Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL 33701, telephone (800)367-5135. If the evaluation indicates a shortage of required credits, general education requirements must be obtained at a school accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools or an equivalent accrediting association in other regions of the United States. The professional curriculum must be equivalent to American Physical Therapy Association standards. An applicant shall bear the expense of the curriculum evaluation.

*c.* If the professional examination is taken in another state, a certified copy of the scores from the appropriate examination.

*d.* The required fee in the form of a check or money order made payable to the Board of Physical and Occupational Therapy Examiners.

*e.* An official transcript, with school seal, of physical therapist assistant professional curriculum.

*f.* A notarized copy of the certificate or diploma awarded the applicant from a physical therapist assistant school accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the American Physical Therapy Association Commission on Accreditation and Education. If the applicant graduated from a degree program which did not issue a diploma stating the applicant's degree is in a physical therapist assistant program, the application shall include a statement verifying that the degree was in a physical therapist assistant program.

**202.3(2)** Rescinded IAB 10/23/96, effective 10/4/96.

**202.3(3)** An applicant, who will be working as a physical therapist assistant prior to licensure, shall include on the application form the name of the licensed, supervising physical therapist who will be providing supervision of the applicant until the applicant is licensed. The applicant will notify the board, within seven days, of any change in supervision.

**202.3(4)** Scores of examinations taken more than five years prior to date of application by examination will be considered invalid.

**202.3(5)** An applicant physical therapist assistant is a person who has made application for licensure and is awaiting board action. The applicant may practice under the supervision of a licensed physical therapist for a period not to exceed six months in the case of licensure by examination. During this time the applicant may perform physical therapy procedures as delegated by the supervising physical therapist only under "on-site" supervision. Documentation made in physical therapy records by an applicant physical therapist assistant shall be cosigned by the supervising physical therapist.

#### **645—202.4(147) Licensure by interstate endorsement.**

**202.4(1)** An individual currently licensed as a physical therapist assistant in another state seeking a license to practice as a physical therapist assistant in Iowa will be considered on an individual basis under the principle of interstate endorsement.

**202.4(2)** Applications for licensure to practice as a physical therapist assistant in Iowa shall be made to Professional Licensure, Iowa Department of Public Health, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0075.

**202.4(3)** An applicant for licensure by interstate endorsement shall have successfully completed a course of study for the physical therapist assistant accredited by the commission on accreditation in education of the American Physical Therapy Association, or another appropriate accrediting body, and have passed an examination administered by the board of physical and occupational therapy examiners, and:

- a.* Have practiced as a physical therapist assistant for a minimum of 2,080 hours during the immediate preceding three-year time period; or
- b.* Have served as a full-time faculty member teaching in a physical therapist assistant program in a school of physical therapy for at least one of the immediate preceding three years; or
- c.* Have graduated from an approved physical therapist assistant program within a period of one year from the date of graduation to the time application is completed for licensure; or
- d.* Have completed 40 hours of board-approved continuing education.

**202.4(4)** Applicants shall arrange to provide the board with:

- a.* An official statement from each state board of examiners regarding the status of the applicant's license, including issue date, expiration date and information regarding any pending or prior investigations or disciplinary action. The applicant shall request such statements from all states in which they are currently or formerly licensed.

- b.* A certified copy of the scores from the appropriate professional examination.

- c.* Foreign trained physical therapist assistants will submit an English translation and an equivalency evaluation of their professional curriculum. Education equivalency will be evaluated by one of the following: International Education Research Foundations, Inc., Credentials Evaluation Service, P.O. Box 66940, Los Angeles, CA 90066, telephone (213)390-6276; International Consultants of Delaware, Inc., 109 Barksdale, Professional Center, Newark, DE 19711, telephone (302)737-8715; International Credentialing Associates, South Trust Bank Building, Suite 1600, 150 Second Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL 33701, telephone (800)367-5135. If the evaluation indicates a shortage of required credits, general education requirements must be obtained at a school accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools or an equivalent accrediting association in other regions of the United States. The professional curriculum must be equivalent to American Physical Therapy Association standards. An applicant shall bear the expense of the curriculum evaluation.

**202.4(5)** An applicant for licensure under subrule 202.4(3), paragraphs "a" and "b," must include with this application a sworn statement of previous physical therapist assistant practice from employer or professional associate, detailing places and dates of employment and verifying that the applicant has practiced as a physical therapist assistant at least 2,080 hours or taught as a full-time faculty member for at least one of the immediately preceding years during the last three-year time period.

**202.4(6)** An applicant shall submit the required fee in the form of a check or money order made payable to the Board of Physical and Occupational Therapy Examiners.

**202.4(7)** An applicant physical therapist assistant is a person who has made application for licensure and is awaiting board action. The applicant may practice under the supervision of a licensed physical therapist for a period not to exceed three months in the case of licensure by endorsement. During this time the applicant may perform physical therapy procedures as delegated by the supervising physical therapist only under "on-site" supervision. Documentation made in physical therapy records by an applicant physical therapist assistant shall be cosigned by the supervising physical therapist.

**202.4(8)** An applicant who will be working as a physical therapist assistant prior to licensure shall include on the application form the name of the licensed, supervising physical therapist who will be providing supervision of the applicant until the applicant is licensed. In the event that there is a change of the supervising physical therapist providing supervision, the applicant shall submit the name of the therapist to the board in writing within seven days after the change in supervision takes place.

**202.4(9)** Applicants not meeting all requirements in this rule are required to meet all the requirements as set out in rule 202.3(147), including taking or retaking the appropriate physical therapist assistant professional examination.

**645—202.5** Reserved.

**645—202.6(147) License renewal.**

**202.6(1)** Beginning July 1, 1999, a license to practice as a physical therapist assistant shall expire every two years on the fifteenth day of the birth month. Continuing education requirements shall be completed within the same renewal period for each license holder.

An application and a continuing education report form for renewal of license to practice as a physical therapist assistant shall be mailed to the licensee at least 60 days prior to the expiration of the license. Failure to receive the renewal application shall not relieve the license holder of the obligation to pay biennial renewal fees on or before the renewal date.

**202.6(2)** Beginning July 1, 1999, the continuing education requirements will coincide with the renewal compliance period. The licensee shall submit to the board office, 30 days before licensure expiration, the application and continuing education report form with the renewal fee as specified in rule 202.7(147). Individuals who were issued their initial licenses within six months of their birth month will not be required to renew their licenses until the fifteenth day of their birth month two years later. The new licensee is exempt from meeting the continuing education requirement for the continuing education biennium in which the license is originally issued. Individuals will be required to report 20 hours of continuing education for every renewal thereafter.

**202.6(3)** Late renewal. If the renewal fees are received by the board within 30 days after the renewal expiration date, a penalty fee is charged. If renewal fees are received more than 30 days after the renewal expiration date, the license is lapsed. An application for reinstatement must be filed with the board with the reinstatement fee, the renewal fee and the penalty fee as outlined in rule 202.7(147). Individuals who fail to submit the renewal application and complete documentation of continuing education hours shall be required to pay a penalty fee and shall be subject to an audit of their continuing education report.

**202.6(4)** Physical therapist assistants who have not fulfilled the requirements for license renewal or an exemption in the required time frame will have a lapsed license and shall not practice as a physical therapist assistant.

**645—202.7(147) License fees.** All fees are nonrefundable.

**202.7(1)** The application fee for a license to practice as a physical therapist assistant issued upon the basis of examination or endorsement is \$90 in check or money order made payable to the Board of Physical and Occupational Therapy Examiners. There is an additional fee for the examination. The fee for the examination is listed on the application form.

**202.7(2)** The renewal fee for a license to practice physical therapy for a biennial period is \$45.

**202.7(3)** Penalty fee for failure to complete and return the physical therapist assistant renewal application before the renewal expiration date is \$45.

**202.7(4)** Penalty fee for failure to complete the required continuing education during the renewal period is \$50. Failure to complete and return the continuing education report by the end of the renewal period is \$50.

**202.7(5)** Reinstatement fee following inactive exemption and lapsed license is \$100.

**202.7(6)** Fee for certified statement that a licensee is licensed in Iowa is \$10.

**202.7(7)** Fee for failure to report, in writing, change of address after 30 days is \$10.

**202.7(8)** Fee for failure to report, in writing, change of name within 30 days is \$10.

**202.7(9)** Fee for a duplicate or replacement license is \$10.

**202.7(10)** Fee for a returned check is \$15.

**645—202.8(272C) Grounds for discipline.** The board may impose any of the disciplinary sanctions set forth in these rules, including civil penalties in an amount not to exceed \$1,000, when the board determines that the licensee is guilty of any of the following acts or offenses.

**202.8(1)** All grounds listed in Iowa Code section 147.55.

**202.8(2)** Violation of the rules promulgated by the board.

**202.8(3)** Personal disqualifications:

*a.* Mental or physical inability reasonably related to and adversely affecting the licensee's ability to practice in a safe and competent manner.

*b.* Involuntary commitment for treatment of mental illness, drug addiction or alcoholism.

**202.8(4)** Practicing the profession while the license is suspended or lapsed.

**202.8(5)** Revocation, suspension, or other disciplinary action taken by a licensing authority of another state, territory, or country; or failure by the licensee to report in writing to the Iowa board of physical and occupational therapy examiners revocation, suspension, or other disciplinary action taken by a licensing authority of another state, territory, or country; or both.

**202.8(6)** Negligence by the licensee in the practice of the profession, which is a failure to exercise due care including negligent delegation to or supervision of employees or other individuals, whether or not injury results; or any conduct, practice or conditions which impair the ability to safely and skillfully practice the profession.

**202.8(7)** Failure to comply with the following rules of ethical conduct and practice.

*a.* A physical therapist assistant shall not practice outside the scope of the license.

*b.* When the physical therapist assistant does not possess the skills or knowledge to perform the delegated tasks, the physical therapist assistant is obligated to inform the delegating physical therapist and refuse to perform the delegated tasks.

*c.* The physical therapist assistant shall not exercise undue influence on patients to purchase equipment produced or supplied by a company in which the physical therapist owns stock or has any other direct or indirect financial interest.

*d.* Physical therapist assistants shall not permit another person to use their licenses for any purpose.

*e.* A physical therapist assistant shall not obtain, possess, or attempt to obtain or possess a controlled substance without lawful authority or sell, prescribe, give away, or administer a controlled substance in the practice of physical therapy.

*f.* A physical therapist assistant shall not verbally or physically abuse a patient.

*g.* A physical therapist assistant shall not engage in sexual misconduct. Sexual misconduct includes the following:

(1) Engaging in or soliciting a sexual relationship, whether consensual or nonconsensual, with a patient.

(2) Making sexual advances, requesting sexual favors, or engaging in other verbal conduct or physical contact of a sexual nature with a patient.

*h.* The physical therapist assistant shall work only when supervised by a physical therapist and in accordance with rule 645—200.11(272C). If the available supervision does not meet the standards as set forth in rule 645—200.11(272C), the physical therapist assistant shall refuse to administer treatment.

*i.* The signature of the physical therapist assistant on a physical therapy treatment record indicates that the physical therapy services were provided in accordance with the rules and regulations for practicing as a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant.

**202.8(8)** Unethical business practices, consisting of any of the following:

*a.* False or misleading advertising.

*b.* Betrayal of a professional confidence.

*c.* Falsifying patient's records.

**202.8(9)** Failure to notify the board of a change of name or address within 30 days after it occurs.

**202.8(10)** Submission of a false report of continuing education, or failure to submit the required report of continuing education.

**202.8(11)** Failure to notify the board within 30 days after occurrence of any judgment or settlement of a malpractice claim or disciplinary action taken by another state.

**202.8(12)** Failure to comply with a subpoena issued by the board.

**202.8(13)** Failure to report to the board as provided in Iowa Code section 272C.9 any violation by another licensee of the reasons for disciplinary action as listed in this rule.

**202.8(14)** Failure to report to the board as provided in Iowa Code section 272C.9 any violation by a physical therapist of the reasons for disciplinary action as listed in rule 645—13.1(272C).

**202.8(15)** Obtaining a license by fraud or misrepresentation.

**202.8(16)** Conviction of a felony related to the practice of physical therapy or the conviction of any felony that would affect the licensee's ability to practice physical therapy. A copy of the record of conviction shall be conclusive evidence. Conviction shall include a finding or verdict of guilty, a plea of guilty, an admission of guilt, or a plea of nolo contendere.

**202.8(17)** Professional incompetency. Professional incompetency includes but is not limited to:

*a.* A substantial lack of knowledge or ability to discharge professional obligations within the physical therapist assistant's practice;

*b.* A substantial deviation by the physical therapist assistant from the standards of learning or skill ordinarily possessed and applied by other physical therapist assistants in the state of Iowa acting in the same or similar circumstances;

*c.* A failure by a physical therapist assistant to exercise that degree of care which is ordinarily exercised by the average physical therapist assistant in the state of Iowa acting in the same or similar circumstances;

*d.* A willful or repeated departure from or the failure to conform to the minimal standard of acceptable and prevailing practice of physical therapy in the state of Iowa.

**202.8(18)** Inability to practice physical therapy with reasonable skill and safety by reason of a mental or physical impairment or chemical abuse.

**202.8(19)** Violating a lawful order of the board, previously entered by the board in a disciplinary or licensure hearing, or violating the terms and provisions of a consent agreement or informal settlement between a licensee and the board.

**202.8(20)** Failure to respond, when requested, to communications of the board within 30 days of the mailing of such communication by registered or certified mail.

**202.8(21)** Obtaining third-party payment through fraudulent means. Third-party payers include, but are not limited to, insurance companies and government reimbursement programs. Obtaining payment through fraudulent means includes, but is not limited to:

*a.* Reporting incorrect treatment dates for the purpose of obtaining payment;

*b.* Reporting charges for services not rendered;

*c.* Incorrectly reporting services rendered for the purpose of obtaining payment which is greater than that to which the licensee is entitled; or

*d.* Aiding a patient in fraudulently obtaining payment from a third-party payer.

**202.8(22)** Practicing without a current license or practicing when a license is lapsed.

**645—202.9(147) Reinstatement of lapsed license.** Rescinded IAB 11/29/00, effective 1/3/01.

**645—202.10(147) License fees.** Renumbered as 645—202.7(147), IAB 11/29/00.

**645—202.11(272C) Continuing education requirements.** Rescinded IAB 11/29/00, effective 1/3/01.

**645—202.12(272C) Standards for approval.** Rescinded IAB 11/29/00, effective 1/3/01.

**645—202.13(272C) Reporting continuing education credits.** Rescinded IAB 11/29/00, effective 1/3/01.

**645—202.14(272C) Hearings.** Rescinded IAB 11/29/00, effective 1/3/01.

**645—202.15(272C) Disability or illness.** Rescinded IAB 11/29/00, effective 1/3/01.

**645—202.16 to 202.22** Reserved.

**645—202.23(272C) Grounds for discipline.** Renumbered as 645—202.8(272C), IAB 11/29/00.

**645—202.24(272C) Supervision requirements.** The board adopts herein by reference rule 645—200.11(272C).

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code chapters 147 and 272C.

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